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## Sonja Hedlund to Friends in Christ, 19 September 1964

Sonja Hedlund

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Hiroshima Jogakuen  
Hiroshima, Japan  
September 19

Dear Friends in Christ,

It was with shame that I read once again about the 3 pastors who tried to worship with you in April, but were turned away for "interfering with divine worship." (International Journal of Christian Education, May 1964)

As a missionary of the Methodist Church working in Japan, and as a Christian, I can't say strongly enough how the action of your congregation is a denial of our universal fellowship in Christ. If Negro and White men can't worship God in America, what right has a missionary to go to a foreign country to tell God's love of men? —

To tell them of a worldwide community of love of those united in Christ?

I am constantly questioned about racial violence in America. Japanese people here, of course, seen countless pictures of violence caused by racial disagreement. This is certainly not in accord with our American ideals of freedom. But more important for me, these situations show that the Church is not truly alive to God's Spirit. As



Christians we must set out our faith in  
our Society, and not cling to our  
fellowship in Christ as a private possession  
from which we can exclude others.  
Such thinking only proves one's mis-  
understanding of the Gospel and failure  
to except all brothers in Christ.

I would be most happy to  
have your comments on this letter.

With every blessing

Sonja Hedlund

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The Pastor

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